direct road of the invader, is a specimen of misery difficult, I expect, to be matched: the street, or rough track rather, is deserted; half the houses have been gutted in some war, or never finished; and the wind on this wild unsheltered plain howls and moans through the broken mud walls and wood-barred windows: nothing could exceed its wretchedness, desertion, and solitude. Whoso loveth melancholy let him spend a few days here. At last got places for Valladolid, rain all the way (October). Saw San Pablo and San Gregorio, or rather the convents of these names, both miracles of carving and decidedly of much merit, more pictorial though than architectural. La Antigua has a small remarkable Norman tower. The cathedral nothing, plain in every way. The Campo Grande is a large stupid place, and the Madrid gate not worth looking at, though locally admired. San Salvador has a good brick tower, with small gurgoyles in cornice (Renaissance). San Benito, too, has a fine tower. The entrance and the cloisters of S. Gregorio are certainly superior to S. Pablo: the whole façade is formed by trees, osiers, and straw, the columns being twisted branches with knobs on them, the cusps formed by single or twisted branches and leaves. Statues of wild men and women are plentiful, and extraordinary demons, beasts, and figures stud the foliage. The court-yard is very fine and curious. The whole forms a mass of elaborate work more fitted for a royal palace than a convicts' prison, which it now is. The court is in a transition style—very theatrical: there are some good Gothic doors, a noble staircase, and a chapel, very good, with rich stone pulpit. The front of the convent put me in mind of a fanciful German design for a frontispiece. The palace of Fabio Nelli is very fair; the portal, however, too delicate for the general massive character of building: the court is spoilt by those ugly depressed arches. The museum is full of remarkable and excellent sculpture, saved from domestic and foreign foe. The Saviour on Mary's knee, by Hernandes, is very beautiful and affecting: in the dim light of evening it is startling. I now can understand the statue of Hermions: the grief of the mother's face Guido could not surpass. Many figures, or demons rather, from a group of the Crucifixion, are fancifully dressed, and are generally very exaggerated, though strikingly impressive. The Christ deposed, by Juan de Juni, is of a more Jove-like character: it is the corpse of a strong-muscled and strong-headed man: it is covered with blood, and is rather disgusting. Many of the little groups in wood are first-rate; sculptors unknown; but they occupy a place between Gothic and the Revival. I have mentioned these, because they form a school of painted sculpture little known out of Spain, and of much merit. Valladolid is a ruin; its palaces deserted; its monasteries, many and rich, destroyed; its churches closed; its university decaying: in the direct road of Napoleon, it has suffered terribly, as did we, for the ground was now covered with snow (October 18th)—no fire—no attendance—broken windows—Inn de las Diligencias: very glad to start for Burgos. The cathedral, though deprived of its portals by some sinner of an archbishop, is the finest exterior I have seen in Spain: the architecture is good, and the pierced spires very beautiful: these with the dome or cimborio, the Constable's Chapel, and the Gate of Santa Maria form a grand and ancient group. It was commenced A.D. 1221, under the auspices of an *English* archbishop, Mauricio; and it is enriched with fine specimens of architectural art from that date down to the time of Herrera (A.D. 1570). The chapels are all worthy of attention, the finest being that of the Constable of Castile—a magnificent monument of late Gothic, externally and internally, well designed, and well executed. The cloisters are charming, and of excellent Gothic (fourteenth century); the application of natural foliage—holly, waterlily, &c. on soffits of arches, very remarkable and effective. The north and south portals are grand, and make one deeply deplore the destruction of the principal entrance. The spires are the work of John of Cologne, *circa* 1442, and have no internal support or tie. Were they not pierced with rich tracery, they could never have resisted the storms of this really wind-scoured tableland. The cimborio is Plateresque, by Felipe de Borgona—bad in a strict architectural point of view, but the work of a true and great artist, and the finest monument of that style in Spain. The coro is rich in first-rate woodwork and illuminated missals of the most elaborate description, now much injured and quite neglected. The well-known stone staircase is very good, but injured by a confused unmeaning iron railing. The whole building is full of interest to the architect in every branch of his art. Some of the ironwork is unequalled; and the sepulchral monuments of invariably fine sculpture—sufficient by themselves to form a work.

The numerous monasteries and convents here are turned into barracks, storehouses, &c. They have been dreadfully knocked about: of a good late Gothic, generally: they must have been splendid—now they are utterly ruined. The Huelgas (a royal convent, still with some few nuns), has a remarkable and good Byzantine cloister, and possesses some excellent Early Gothic bits well deserving of close study. The sepulchral monuments here are very ancient and interesting. Unfortunately no one is allowed to enter without a Royal order, very difficult to be obtained: this is the more to be regretted, as there is so much really valuable work, especially for the antiquary. The Hospital del Rey has many good Plateresque parts; and the town has many Gothic churches, from the most ancient down to the latest Gothic. Visited the Cartuja of Miraflores, and saw the tombs there: they are the work of Maestro Gil, A.D. 1493, and are invaluable. This man was an artist, and a fine one. The plan of the King's tomb is a star: on it he reclines beneath a richly-worked niche. A small short line of tracery separates him from his wife: their robes are miracles of delicate labour. The figures, foliage, architecture,—the skill, fancy, and industry displayed in these works are, I should think, literally matchless. The niche, or rather canopy, containing the life-size statue of the king, ends at the feet in a foliated bracket, against which two lions crouch in rage and despair. The head of the canopy is adorned with pinnacles, foliage, and figures, let into a piece of solid alabaster of graceful outline, with the royal arms on the reverse. The sides are of the most wonderfully elaborate workmanship—niches, pinnacles, figures small and large—a study for all men. The whole tomb should be raised, and seems to me to want a basement, which might be sculptured more plainly. The lions and animals crouching round and at angles I do not like. The foliage in this and the tomb of Don Alonzo is beautiful: it is curious that the ivy leaf does not once occur. The best are the vine, oak, rose, and thistle. In this foliage are carved snails, butterflies, birds, children, men and monsters, fighting, flying, hiding, drinking—such ornament as might befit a monument to Shakspeare—for which, indeed, this affords a good idea. Spanish Gothic is generally very picturesque and ornamental: figures and leaves fully relieved from a hollow moulding often finish on a small column: columns often stop on the wall supported by a sculptured bracket: statues at angles in niches are frequent and good; arches of small mouldings and elaborately carved; a great use of varied leaves for crotchets, finials, &c. and a great number of the same; mouldings cut out in an opposite form to their base, as angle from square, circle from angle, &c. are the chief features of that rich and sculpturesque school of Late Gothic which flourished so signally in the north of Spain, and which, introduced from Germany, found worthy disciples among the native Spaniards.

The palaces here are generally very picturesque (Renaissance), bracketted out above ground-floor—like some of our half-timber bridges—with a series of enriched mouldings, formed at angles into the base of a circular turret: as usual, the columns are of the bed-post genus,—long, thin, and ugly.

The use of armorial bearings is excessive in Castile: they are usually well designed, with a border round them, or motto in border: some form really fine ornamental features. From here to Vittoria—the principal city of the Basque provinces: there is much interesting street architecture here, and some good Gothic churches. Spain may now almost be said to be left behind: its worst features are gone: dirt, neglect, and indolence are replaced by cleanliness and activity. However the country and people may improve, it loses in interest to the architect. San Sebastian is more remarkable for its fortifications and picturesque situation on the wild Bay of Biscay than for its buildings. From hence the change grows more and more marked, until we reach Bayonne, in which hybrid and delightful town we may consider ourselves safe out of Spain, with an inkling that we live once more in the 19th century.

In taking leave of this interesting country, allow me just to glance over the various styles which adorn it, and to give an opinion as to their merit. The oldest works are those of the Romans, and from those I have seen and what I have read and seen engraved, I should imagine that they must be of a grand and noble character, and well deserving of being delineated and formed into a volume. Next, there are many and remarkable examples of a Normanesque architecture in the north of Spain, known commonly as "*obras de los godos*:" some of the gateways in this style are very fine, but being generally in out-of-the-way parts—villages and provincial towns—they are little known, but I should say of great merit. Contemporaneously with this massive, manly style in the north, existed the entirely opposite, delicate and feminine style of the Moors in the south: on this it would be unnecessary to dilate: to my mind, *in its way*, it is the perfection of art and good taste. Shortly before the expulsion of the Moors, their style had merged into Gothic, and the mixture forms one of the most picturesque and fanciful periods in Spain: its characteristic is ornament of a really gorgeous description. On the expulsion of the Moor, Gothic, introduced by various German artists, reigned pre-eminent, and formed a fine sculptural and truly artistic school of architecture, whose monuments are still the pride of Spain; but its beauty insured it no stability, and soon fashion brought the Revival, which gradually worked into it, and was finally triumphant. Of this Revival, known as Plateresque, I have no high opinion in general: the fertility of invention and spirited execution of its sculpture struck me as pre-eminent: it is *over*-worked with ornament, and, as architecture, it generally fails in proportion and simplicity: applied to domestic purposes, on a small scale, it is good, but has been much, I humbly think, overpraised, and would never repay detailed study. The best specimen of the period between florid Plateresque and the simplicity of Herrera, is the palace built for Charles the Sixth at the Alhambra. Herrera himself designed on a grand scale, and carried out his works with a certain noble simplicity, forming a good school of Romano Greek architecture. After him, came the heresiarch Churriguera, utterly unworthy of mention, except for condemnation, and then the insanities of the modern Academicians. Taken altogether, there are few towns which would not interest an observant architect, and if he has a dash of the artist about him, with eyes not eternally fixed on the merely *correct* merit of architecture, he will visit this strange land with pleasure, study it with advantage, and leave it with regret.

I. B. W.

COPPER ORES.—The sale of foreign, Welsh, and Irish ores at Swansea, will, it is said, on the quarter ending 31st inst. show a further decrease of 519 tons: it exhibited to end of December last, a falling off of 3,707 tons on that quarter, so that the actual decrease during the last six months is no less than 4,226 tons. The decline is owing chiefly to non arrivals.

OIL FOR LUBRICATING MACHINERY.—The *Chemical Record* describes an oil prepared from southern oil and cocoa nut or lard oil by means of solution of American potash for the lubrication of machinery.

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